

Subject: Chat with Jonathan Farley

From: Jonathan Farley <lattice.theory@gmail.com>

To: barriticus@gmail.com

10:03 AM **me:** morning

or whatever it is in Austria

Jonathan: Hi

me: did the McCain article on you come out before or after Gee called on campus police to protect his precious ass?

Jonathan: I don't know.

I only found out about how Gee needed police protection long afterward.

10:04 AM **me:** okay

Jonathan: For the reasons I told you, I deliberately did not want to know what was going on in Nashville

me: gotcha

Jonathan: so no one could claim I knew about what was happening regarding the suit.

Also, as you can see from The Tennessean article about the person who threatened Gee,

the article was published in mid-January 2003.

10:05 AM As my brother angrily pointed out, Vanderbilt should have made this public long before.

me: good point

10:06 AM **Jonathan:** Gee divorced his wife, Constance, after the Wall Street Journal articles.

Her tongue may be looser about

what he was really thinking and saying during this episode (2002-2005).

10:07 AM <http://pullinsreport.com/2006/09/27/wall-street-journal-details-lavish-gordon-gee-spending.aspx>

10:08 AM Reporter: Lublin, Joann <Joann.Lublin@wsj.com>

Fax number 212 416 3306.

10:09 AM Also, I believe I once heard that Constance Gee was a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (perhaps named an honorary member when Gee became head of Vanderbilt?), but I cannot now remember where I heard that and do not know if it is true.

If true, this would of course represent a conflict of interest.

18 minutes

10:28 AM **me:** Also, I left a message for McCarty last night

Jonathan: Okay.

10:29 AM I don't remember who the dean was in 2002, but on the morning of Friday, November 22, 2002, when I had noticed that neo-Confederates were now writing Gordon Gee (cc'ing me) and the chairman of

the math department, Mike Mihalik,

I went to Mihalik and told him to either ignore the email messages or, better yet, forward them to me so I knew who was writing.

10:30 AM Mihalik replied he would do neither: he would not show me the emails nor would be delete them.

He sent the to the dean, to be placed in my file the way student complaints might be.

(I was coming up for tenure.)

10:31 AM I wrote the general counsel (who was celebrated, as Obama was, merely because he was black and a high-level administrator) and thereafter Vanderbilt claimed that this information was not being used against me.

I never made this a big deal before since this was a verbal conversation I had with Mihalik, meaning he could deny it ever took place.

10:32 AM **me:** if you can find that correspondence between you and Mihalik, send it along
ah, okay

Jonathan: But, now that I think about it, he might not, since he might be worried that the emails would turn up either in his files or in the dean's.

me: right, I'll need to ask about that, too

Jonathan: As I said, this was a verbal conversation in the hallway, not via email.

me: gotcha

Jonathan: And also, I do not know if McCarty was the dean in November 2002.

10:33 AM But it was someone.

That is why Nick Zeppos, the current chancellor of Vanderbilt, told me in 2003 (around April) that they had forgotten to consider my tenure case and would need a few more months.

me: I just checked

10:34 AM McCarty became dean of Arts and Sciences in 2001

Jonathan: My speculation is that they were looking for any excuse to deny me tenure but knew they would have problems because I wrote so many letters about Mihalik's actions.

Therefore, if they denied me tenure I could sue them for racial discrimination. (I wouldn't have because that would have made me vulnerable to the United Daughters of the Confederacy)

10:35 AM **me:** yeah, that's pretty obvious at this point, and extraordinarily easy to establish with this letter from McCarty coupled with the actual facts

Jonathan: But my theory is that when I told Vanderbilt I had not been a member of the faculty for some time, in June 2003, they gave me tenure because I could not sue them if they hadn't actually discriminated against me.

10:36 AM And then, in late 2004, when I decided to come back to Vanderbilt, the court case starts up again.

Again, my theory being: this was the deal Vanderbilt cut with the United

- Daughters of the Confederacy. "Leave us alone, and we'll give you Farley."
- 10:37 AM There used to be a newspaper article on-line profiling one of the neo-Confederates (I think a leader of the Southern Independence Party of Tennessee), where he thanks people who participated in the "Farley Project", with no further explanation of what that was.
- 10:38 AM Maybe he was talking about the comic about a dog.
- 10:39 AM McCarty might also be reluctant to deny outright that he received death threats, for similar reasons: his claim could be refuted.
- 10:40 AM Which would make it an interesting question to ask, in my view, especially given the scepticism he displays in the letter he sent me regarding the threats I "claim" to have received.
- 10:42 AM Note also that the letter, sent in late February, probably was right in the middle of the lawsuit, which was decided (in favor of the UDC) I believe in May 2005, which Vanderbilt saying it would not appeal in June or July 2005, so it's not even credible for McCarty to talk about a "purported debate".
- 10:45 AM Incidentally, factually, there were no limitations regarding how long faculty members (at least, around that time) could go on leave, especially an unpaid leave. Thadious Davis was on leave I believe for years at a time, and that's just someone I knew. The Faculty Manual stated (as I recall) that if you went on **paid** leave, it would be nice if you returned to Vanderbilt for the same length of time.
- 10:47 AM **me:** you don't happen to have an exact quote from the faculty manual, do you?
Jonathan: No, I'm afraid not. But I did look at the Faculty Manual for the relevant year just a few months ago when I was last in the US.
- 10:48 AM But the proof is that McCarty's letter to me, which was clearly written by a team of lawyers, does not quote from any Vanderbilt regulation saying I cannot continue my leave of absence.
- 10:49 AM Incidentally, calculus is the easiest class to teach, and there were probably plenty of graduate students who would have been happy to teach the courses I was slated to teach.
- 10:50 AM (I also question McCarty's number---that there were 75 students---since I don't think I ever had 38 students in a class, and Vanderbilt prided itself on having small classes, if I recall correctly. But this is a minor point, and here I could be wrong.)
- 10:51 AM (But I mention it since Vanderbilt may seek to divert the discussion from what they did to me.)
- 10:54 AM The bottom line is: a black faculty member got death threats and libeled in the media, and wanted to continue an unpaid leave of absence, and McCarty instead tried to punish that faculty member.
- 10:59 AM **me:** even more so
the bottom line is that he lied in doing so
and almost certainly violated some sort of regulation
I'm going to tread carefully when I talk to him and try to get him to tell me what

he remembers about the whole incident
11:00 AM which will almost certainly be contrary to his nonsense statement in the letter to you
done properly, this can bring him down
or at least make him very uncomfortable

Jonathan: A David Brown at Wake Forest University published the book, "University Presidents As Moral Leaders".

11:01 AM <http://www.wfu.edu/~brown/berkeley/sld020.htm>
although I think he is now retired.

I asked him how a legal team had approved the libel in Gordon Gee's article. I got no response.

11:02 AM The president of Claremont McKenna College, Pamela Gann (whom I met in 2003 at a memorial service for a faculty member whom my father had hired), wrote the response to Gee's article.

I asked her several times if she knew the whole story.

11:03 AM I got a response once only because she accidentally emailed me instead of her secretary, asking if I was an alumnus.

14 minutes

11:18 AM **Jonathan:** Ironically, several black mathematicians (including the great David Blackwell, now a professor at Berkeley), were not allowed to attend a conference at Vanderbilt.

<http://frodo.elon.edu/maase/minority.pdf>

The president of the organization, Saunders Mac Lane (who co-authored the book that first sparked my interest in lattice theory) would not allow them.

11:19 AM The white mathematician who tried to bring them, Lee Lorch, later had to leave the United States thanks to...The Tennessean and the House Un-American Affairs Committee (as I have heard the story).

11:23 AM James Lawson, who was expelled from Vanderbilt, doesn't answer email but may take phone calls.

<http://www.potentialsmedia.com/RevJamesLawson.html>

me: what's his connection again?

Jonathan: He was one of the leaders of the civil rights movement in Nashville.

11:24 AM **me:** very well

Jonathan: He was expelled from Vanderbilt as a result of his activity

me: okay, that merits a mention

Jonathan: but then a few years ago Vanderbilt invited him as a visiting professor.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/04/education/04lawson.html>

me: I've got everything I need for the first, shorter piece for VF

will write it now and send it to you in a couple of hours for you to review

11:25 AM **Jonathan:** "Bringing him here isn't about making apologies, because that happened many years ago," said Lucius Outlaw (a Vanderbilt administrator who, like Obama, gives great speeches, but what he does is something else)

Okay, I'll get back to doing math.

11:26 AM <http://www.unityfirst.com/pressreleasejameslawson.htm>

11:27 AM **me:** better you than me